

large sum. The objections raised by the Secretary of State on behalf of the government, as I gather, are twofold. First he says there is the question of discrimination, and secondly, that you must pay regard to the standpoint of the taxpayer of the country. Those are the two main objections, I gather, to giving the increase to the railway mail service, apart from the further fact—I might call it No. 2—that they had some increase in 1924. I am not impressed with the two arguments advanced by the Secretary of State. As to the question of discrimination, there is no comparison between the hazards of the life of the railway mail clerk, and the life of an ordinary civil servant. Hon. members have only to reflect that every day these men are on duty on their run they are in danger. If my hon. friend will look up the statistics he will find that the average life of railway employees on the United States railways is only eleven years. I will leave it to the Minister of Labour if I am not correct. I am talking of engineers and of the operating staff. I need not say that the railway mail clerks are occupying as hazardous a position, we will say as the brakemen, or engineers or locomotive firemen, but if my hon. friend will go to the Post Office Department he will learn that there is a very substantial percentage of accidental deaths due to the hazard of the occupation in Canada. One of the worst sights I ever saw in my life was an accident to a railway mail clerk at Palmer's Point, Dorchester, when a huge express train went over the embankment into the the slough, and the only man killed was the railway mail clerk. The engineer and the brakeman survived. The railway mail clerk was a resident of my own city. I knew him well, and because of the hazards and the risks that these men take I say there should be discrimination in their favour. They are not paid out of proportion to the risks involved in the course of their occupation. Neither am I impressed by the plea of protection to the pocket of the taxpayer, in view of the exhibition of prodigality we had last night in the expenditures provided for in the supplementary and main estimates as well as the other expenditures voted this year. It ill becomes the Secretary of State or any hon. member on the government benches to talk about protecting the taxpayer. I marvelled last night and said to myself: Where is the Minister of Finance, and why did we not have some word from him on behalf of the taxpayers of the country? We have had no word from him in that regard this session, I am sorry to say. I have the very high-

est respect for my hon. friend. I am sorry to have to admit that he has fallen down on the job. You will be doing less than justice if you do give this increase to the railway mail clerks; and you will be doing an injustice if you refuse it.

Mr. ROBB: Mr. Chairman, my hon. friend is one of the whips of the opposition, and he says he marvels at the Finance minister for allowing votes to go through the House so rapidly. I sit here and marvel at my hon. friends opposite, one moment blowing hot, the next moment blowing cold—advocating extravagant expenditure throughout the country wherever they think it will catch the popular vote.

Mr. HANSON: Will the minister stand up and say that the granting of the increase to the railway mail clerks of this country is extravagance? Let him answer.

Mr. YOUNG (Saskatoon): In this salary revision there appears to be one class that gets an increase of only \$60, in some instances less. The minister explained that in 1924 when salary adjustments were made this class got an increase of about \$180, and he now suggests that they are being treated in a better way than the rest of the service under this revision. Why was there any revision of the salaries of that class in 1924? If those men and women received an increase on that occasion while the rest of the civil service did not, were the latter discriminated against?

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): No.

Mr. YOUNG (Saskatoon): Then if on that occasion they were given something simply to bring them in line with the other civil servants, I ask are they not now being discriminated against? It seems to me that one or other condition must be true.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): You are perfectly right.

Mr. YOUNG (Saskatoon): I would ask the minister to consider whether we would not be justified in giving a straight \$120 increase all around. If at this moment he is not prepared to do that, I would ask him not to object to the desired increase if after investigation it is found that full justice may not have been done this class. I want to say a good word on behalf of these officials. I know their work, I believe they are entitled to full consideration, and I hope they will get it.

Mr. VENIOT: Mr. Chairman, one of the great difficulties we encounter in dealing with